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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

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March 27, 2008

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Philip L. Browning, Director
Department of Public Social Services

William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Chief Executive Office

**SUBJECT: CalWORKs HOUSING LOCATORS PROGRAM – BOARD MOTION SYN
22, SEPTEMBER 25, 2007 – ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This is to provide your Board with an analysis of housing locator services and recommendations on how best to proceed regarding the third and final year of the Housing Locator contracts from August 2008 through July 2009, as directed in your September 25, 2007 Board motion. You directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Director of Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to provide you with an analysis of the services provided thus far. Your Board also requested specific housing placement commitments from both contractors. As a result, Del Richardson & Associates (DRA) committed to placing 15% of families referred and Weingart Center Association (WCA) committed to placing 30% of families referred.

The Services Integration Branch (SIB) of the CEO is finalizing an evaluation of the housing locator services. This evaluation is based on a period of time when both DPSS and housing locator staff were having difficulties with the program and as a result we expect SIB's report to be critical. The target date for completion of this evaluation is the end of April 2008.

Since the time period covered by the SIB evaluation, there have been several enhancements to the program. This memorandum describes those enhancements and the housing locators' performance from October 2007 through January 2008.

Background

DPSS contracted with two agencies to provide housing locator services to homeless CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work (WtW) families: DRA to cover SPAs 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 and WCA to cover SPA 4. The contract was for a one-year period of August 1, 2006 through July 31, 2007, with the option to renew for two (2) additional one-year periods.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

Background (Continued)

In July 2007, your Board approved an Amendment to extend the contract for a second year from August 2007 through July 2008 with an option for the DPSS Director to renew for one additional year.

In September 2007, your Board approved a second Amendment authorizing a change in the payment structure which now includes the payment of a referral fee and the completion of an assessment for every family to identify barriers preventing the family from securing permanent housing.

Outcomes

The placement percentage rates increased substantially for the period of October 2007 through January 2008: DRA increased its placement rate from 11% to 28% and WCA increased its placement rate from 24% to 38%, both exceeding their commitments. From October 2007 through January 2008, DRA received 361 referrals and placed 101 families (28%), while WCA received 39 referrals and placed 15 families (38%).

Enhancements

In addition to the payment structure change described above, the following programmatic enhancements have been implemented:

- Housing Locators, district administrators, and program and contract managers are meeting on a monthly basis to resolve any programmatic, contractual or operational issues and in the process continue to identify ways to enhance the program.
- DPSS district referral targets are closely monitored. As a result, the quality of the referrals has improved, facilitating placement of the families.
- Electronic Incident Reports are assisting both the contractors and DPSS staff to identify and immediately address any problems.
- Housing Locators were given access and training on use of the Permanent Housing Assistance Services (PHASE) database which serves to track the services provided to homeless families. Housing Locators were provided with contact information to quickly resolve technical or programmatic issues regarding PHASE.
- Implementation of the Barriers to Permanent Housing Assessment form, to identify barriers to permanent housing and facilitate communication and collaboration between Housing Locators and Homeless Case Managers.

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Contract Extension

Based on the substantial improvement in the percentage of homeless families placed into permanent housing by both contractors, DPSS intends to extend the Housing Locator contracts, absent other direction from your Board, for the third and final contract year from August 2008 through July 2009.

We will continue to report on the services and our progress in our bimonthly reports to your Board.

PLB:WTF:le

c: County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors